The year 2012 brought many transitions to SFBBO, both to our programs and our staff. Our Habitats Program, initiated in the summer of 2011, really gained momentum in 2012. We were able to launch several on-the-ground habitat restoration projects in the South Bay with the guidance of two new full-time employees (David Thomson and Aidona Kakouros) moving the program forward. This new programmatic area allows SFBBO to inform bird population management and restoration of the habitats on which these species depend.

With a mission that includes both birds, and their habitats, this is a critical piece of SFBBO’s success story.

Staff transitions included the departure of several valued SFBBO employees, including Executive Director Jill Demers, who has moved north to Arcata, Waterbird Program Director Caitlin Robinson-Nilsen, who became a new mother in the fall of 2012 and stepped away from SFBBO to focus on family, and Stephanie Ellis, Outreach and Communications Director, who has moved to New England. Jill, Caitlin and Stephanie dedicated themselves to SFBBO’s mission, and we are honored to build on their legacy. The ability of SFBBO to continue to attract amazing talent proved true once again. Newcomers during 2012 included Executive Director Dr. Cat Burns, Science Programs Director Dr. Christina Donehower and Outreach and Membership Coordinator Kristin Butler. Each of these new faces brought new skills, ideas, and a shared passion for the mission that we all work to achieve at SFBBO.

Though certainly a year for transition, we did not slow down. The organization held strong due to the steadfast support of the Board, our passionate membership and our dedicated volunteers. In-kind contributions, including donated goods and services (i.e. volunteered time), increased in 2012 compared with previous years. It is notable that during 2012 the total number of hours contributed by volunteers increased by 10%, and the total number of volunteers participating in SFBBO programs also increased. The strong volunteer support for our long-term programs such as our bird banding at SFBBO’s Coyote Creek Field Station, monitoring through our Colonial Waterbird Program, and execution of our Avian Disease and Prevention Program, ensured that these valuable programs continued to function well and in fact grow.

Likewise, financial support through membership and individual and corporate contributions grew in 2012, showing the confidence of our supporters in the work that we do and our ability to meaningfully impact bird conservation and habitat restoration in the Bay Area. Total contributions from membership dues and individual and corporate financial contributions increased by 6% during 2012 compared with the previous year. We appreciate this vote of confidence, which enabled us to close out the year 2012 in a strong financial position. Thank you for all of your support during 2012 — including the time you dedicated to us, the funds that you provided, and the frequent encouragement and positive feedback you gave. Your support ensured that this year of transition propelled us forward rather than setting us back!

We believe that this year of change and growth at SFBBO has positioned us to have a big impact in 2013. The new faces from 2012 are on their way to becoming seasoned veterans, and our new areas of research are gaining momentum. It has been inspiring to see the outpouring of support for our work continue through the changes that the organization has experienced during the past year. Thank you for your steady support, your excitement for what we do, and your willingness to work side by side with SFBBO staff and Board to guide the future of this organization.

Troy Rahmig
Chair, Board of Directors

Cat Burns, Ph.D.
Executive Director
## Statement of Financial Position

### FISCAL YEARS ENDING DECEMBER 31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSETS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</strong></td>
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### Revenue 2012

- In-kind Donations 16%
- Contributions 17%
- Contracts and Federal Grants 61%
- Foundation Grants 4%
- Program Fees 2%

### Expenses 2012

- Habits 24%
- Fundraising 6%
- Outreach 8%
- Administration 8%
- Science 54%
Coyote Creek Field Station

Riparian habitats support rich bird communities, but in California this type of habitat has been dramatically reduced from historic levels. At SFBBO’s Coyote Creek Field Station (CCFS), SFBBO staff and volunteers band birds found in the area’s riparian habitat. We use this information to track avian responses to restoration and urbanization, and to document long-term trends. In 2012, we captured 3,229 birds of 56 species. Forty volunteers spent nearly 4,000 hours to collect this data, which was then shared with researchers from universities and other organizations. In one study, collaborators from San Francisco State University published research that used CCFS data to identify bird responses to climate change, resulting in one of the top 25 most popular papers for the journal in 2012.

Habitat Restoration and Management

SFBBO’s Habitats Program launched in the summer of 2011, and gained momentum in 2012. In 2012, SFBBO worked at six sites, each on the property of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (the Refuge). SFBBO contributed thousands of hours toward developing methods and materials for creating tidal marsh-upland transitional plant communities through applied research and on-the-ground restoration. Our Habitats Program led a study to define and map the extent of tidal marsh-upland transitional habitat, which is an increasingly rare habitat type that will play an important role in marsh adaptation to sea level rise associated with climate change.

Snowy Plover Recovery

The number of Western Snowy Plovers in the San Francisco Bay (as estimated during the annual breeding season window survey) was notably lower in 2012 than in the previous three years. During the 2012 breeding season, we documented 138 plover nests in the San Francisco Bay. Apparent nest success (i.e. the percentage of nests that successfully hatched at least one egg) was 58%, with the majority of nest failures attributed to predation events. Comparison of nest survival rates on plots enhanced with oyster shells to improve camouflage with survival in untreated areas indicated that shells provide some benefit to plover hatching success. SFBBO’s plover research informed pond management and restoration planning across the South Bay in 2012.

Colonial Waterbird Monitoring

This is our oldest program, and one that has been maintained by our dedicated team of citizen scientists who have monitored nesting herons, egrets, terns, gulls and cormorants for 31 years! In 2012, SFBBO volunteers contributed 442 hours of work to monitor 59 waterbird colonies, helping identify important waterbird nesting sites and bringing conservation threats, such as human disturbance, to the attention of resource managers. The program also has the potential to generate public interest in the protection of waterbirds and their habitats.

California Gull Monitoring and Research

SFBBO biologists and volunteers documented over 52,000 nesting California Gulls in the San Francisco Bay in 2012, an increase of nearly 40% since 2011. We and others showed previously that gulls can impact breeding waterbirds through habitat encroachment and nest and chick predation. Therefore, in order to prevent gulls from nesting in ecologically sensitive areas, SFBBO conducted intensive surveys and selective hazing during the gull nest initiation stage. SFBBO’s 30+ years of information on gull colonies
Across the South Bay is used by our partners, the media, and others to quantify changes in gull abundance and to identify plans for gull management. We also continued to monitor gull activity at a local landfill to evaluate the effectiveness of abatement measures in reducing gull use of these areas.

**Avian Response to Grassland Management**

California montane grassland ecosystems are experiencing losses due to development and other land use changes. The remaining montane grassland sites support a unique assemblage of bird species, but relatively little is known about how these species respond to grassland management such as prescribed burning. In 2012, SFBBO continued surveying birds at Russian Ridge and Monte Bello Open Space Preserves to identify the response of grassland bird species to prescribed burning. We observed 463 birds belonging to 44 species during point count surveys, and detected several grassland-obligate species, including Grasshopper Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows, and Western Meadowlarks.

**Common Yellowthroat and Song Sparrow Research**

SFBBO partnered with HT Harvey & Associates to examine the breeding extent of the San Francisco Common Yellowthroat and the Alameda Song Sparrow. These two endemic songbird subspecies breed exclusively in the San Francisco Bay region, have undergone substantial habitat loss and population declines over the past 150 years, and are California Department of Fish and Wildlife Bird Species of Special Concern. Using museum specimens and mist-netting, we clarified the breeding range for each of these species, which will contribute to ongoing efforts to protect them.

**Avian Use of Salt Ponds**

In 2012, SFBBO continued to conduct bird surveys and water quality monitoring in 22 salt evaporation ponds owned by the Refuge and managed for salt production by Cargill Salt. We recorded 324,398 waterbird sightings of 69 species and found water quality parameters often shape observed bird distributions, likely through the distribution of prey items within the ponds. Our research indicates that other habitat features (e.g., islands, levees, or blinds) may be equally important in explaining distributions, particularly for roosting and nesting habitat. These data will aid in pond management, restoration, and bird conservation.

**Avian Disease Prevention Program**

In 1982, SFBBO started surveying the South Bay sloughs in an effort to prevent outbreaks of avian botulism. In 2012, we continued this work, monitoring three locations in partnership with the cities of San Jose and Sunnyvale. We are pleased to report that our biologists and volunteers found no significant evidence of an avian botulism outbreak.

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### 2012 Selected Publications

**Peer-reviewed scientific publications**


Goodman, R.E. G. Lebuhn, N.E. Scavy, T. Gardali, and J.D. Bluso-Demers. 2012. Avian body size changes and climate change: warming or increasing variability? *Global Change Biology* 18(1): 63–73. [This was among the journal’s top 25 most frequently downloaded 2012 papers]


**Professional reports (with SFBBO as lead organization)**


Upcoming Events

BIRD WALK: SUMMER BIRDING THE SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS WITH LISA MYERS
Saturday, July 27, 2013, 8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
SITE: UPPER STEVENS CREEK COUNTY PARK OFF CHARCOAL ROAD
Join former SFBBO Board member and local birding instructor Lisa Myers for a morning walking Charcoal Road and surrounding trails off Skyline Boulevard above Saratoga. We’ll look for species that make this mountain habitat their home including Pacific Wren, Western Tanager, Pileated and Hairy Woodpeckers, Golden Crowned Kinglet and Pygmy Nut-hatch just to name a few. At 2500 feet in elevation this open space offers beautiful birding habitat. All skill levels are welcome. The walk will be at a slow birders pace as we locate our species within the forest habitat. Contact Kristin Butler (408.946.6548 x10 or kbutler@sfbbo.org) to RSVP.

WORKSHOP: SHOREBIRDS
Tuesday, July 30 (instruction), 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Thursday, August 1 (instruction), 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Sunday, August 4 (field trip), TBA
We will dig deep into bird behavior, physiology, ecology, and everything else that is relevant to this season and your enjoyment of migrating shorebirds. This is an opportunity for you to deepen your shorebird identification skills, have a great time, and view many shorebird species.
*Birding Level: Intermediate and up.*

BANDING DEMONSTRATION: A BIRD IN THE HAND
Saturday, September 14, 9:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.
SITE: COYOTE CREEK FIELD STATION, MILPITAS
Visit the Bird Observatory’s bird banding station, the Coyote Creek Field Station. Tour mist nets, watch a bird banding demonstration, and explore a restored riparian habitat. Join us and learn why bird banding is so important for protecting birds and their habitats. RSVP required. Contact Kristin Butler (408.946.6548 x10 or kbutler@sfbbo.org).

WORKSHOP: SEABIRDS
Tuesday, August 27 (instruction), 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Thursday, August 29 (instruction), 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Field Trip: TBA
The rewards of heading out on the ocean to observe seabirds are huge! Seabirds include some of the most amazing of migrant species, birds that use the entire ocean as part of their annual distribution. The ocean off the coast of California offers opportunities to observe iconic species such as albatross, puffins, shearwaters, auklets, and storm-petrels as well as rarities, odd fish, and whales. The classroom portion of this workshop will focus on the identification, ecology, and distribution of seabirds.

This workshop can be taken as just a class or include a discounted pelagic trip. Class is $90; trip is offered at a discounted rate of $110. Please contact Kristin Butler at 408.946.6548 x10 or kbutler@sfbbo.org to sign up for the class portion; contact instructor Alvaro Jaramillo at 650.504.7779 or ajaramillo@sfbbo.org to sign up for the discounted trip. For other pelagic dates, check http://alvarosadventures.com/boat-trips/pelagics.

Reaching Out

Part of the mission at SFBBO is to conserve birds and their habitats through our outreach activities. We continued to inspire and educate the public about birds through our bird walks, workshops, special events, and volunteer opportunities.

- In 2012, Biologist Alvaro Jaramillo hosted 8 separate 12-hour adult education workshops: Gulls, Sparrows, Owls, Migrants, Bird Sound, Shorebirds, Seabirds, and Bird Identification. The workshops combined classroom lectures with field trips that gave participants the opportunity to practice their birding skills.

- Biologist Josh Scullen offered several tours and bird banding demonstrations at our Coyote Creek Field Station to youth groups, college students, and the public.

- During our California Fall Challenge and throughout the year we organized 16 bird walks for the public at locations throughout the Bay Area.

- Groups from corporate community outreach programs, like Citrix’s “Global Day of Impact,” volunteered to help with our habitat restoration activities.

- We continued to develop interest in and understanding of avian science through our Citizen Science volunteer program. More than 100 volunteers were trained in bird identification and observational methods and helped our biologists study and protect birds in our Colonial Waterbird Monitoring, Coyote Creek Field Station bird banding, and Avian Disease Prevention programs.
Thank you to our donors, funders, and partners. Our work would not be possible without your generous support.

**Contributors $100 to $249**
Cheryl and Alan Abel, Regina and Ralph Anavy, Allison Angstadt, Don Arnold, Patricia Bacchetti, Brenda Baker, Chris Bard, Joyce Bartlett, Liz and Bob Bathgate, Leonie Batkin and Debi Jamison, Regina Phelps, Bob Power, Gail Richardson and David Austin, Michael and Alma Kali Rogers, Ann Ruffer, Harry Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne 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Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Brenda Senturia, Martin and Barbara Sidor, Joanne Wallin, Lisa Savage, Bridge   "We would also like to thank the 341 people who gave up to $59."
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